

REMARKS

Applicant expresses appreciation to the Examiner for consideration of the subject patent application. This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed February 3, 2005. Claims 1-7, 9-16, 18-25, 27, and 28 were rejected. Claims 8, 17, and 26 were objected to. Claim 29 was allowed. Claims 1-29 were previously presented. Claims 1, 20, 24, and 25 have been amended. Claims 30 and 31 have been added.

The allowance of Claim 29, and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 8, 17 and 26, if rewritten in independent form, is acknowledged with appreciation. New claims 30 and 31 include the allowable subject matter of claims 8 and 17, respectively.

The following discussion will primarily address the rejections of the independent claims, bearing in mind that if allowability of the independent claims is established, allowability of the dependant claims is established for at least the same reasons, these claims being more narrow in scope than the independent claims from which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-7, 12-15, 18-21, 23-25 and 27-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as anticipated by Collard et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,181,893.

With regard to claim 1, Applicant improperly designated this claim as original in the previous amendment, whereas claim 1 had been amended. Claim 1 has been further amended as shown above to distinguish over the cited art. As Collard does not teach or suggest “enabling connection of a plurality of *interchangeable* peripheral devices,” claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason. Claims 2-7, 9-16, and 18 being dependent from claim 1 are similarly allowable for at least this reason.

Moreover, with respect to dependent claim 6, the cited reference does not teach or suggest a NAPA “configured to fit within and use a *space otherwise taken by a paper tray of the printer*,” and hence is also allowable for at least this reason. With respect to claim 7, the cited reference does not teach or suggest a NAPA “configured so that the printer can be *placed on top of the NAPA*.”

Claims 20, 24, and 25 have been amended similarly to Claim 1. As the cited art fails to teach or suggest the configuration of a plurality of peripheral data connection for connection of interchangeable peripheral device, claims 20, 24, and 25 are allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 21-23 being dependent from claim 20, and claims 27-28 being dependent from claim 25 are similarly allowable for at least this reason.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 9-11, 16, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Collard et. al, in view of Mui et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,160,642.

Claims 9-11, and 16 being dependent on claim 1, and claim 22 being dependent on claim 20, are patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.

Moreover, without admitting that the combination of the Collard and Mui references is proper, when combined, the references do not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claims now in the application. Specifically, the Collard and Mui references are both generally directed to providing copier functionality by providing a scanner with a printer, and do not teach providing for enabling combinations other than a printer and a scanner (as they are directed essentially completely to this concept) in both cases. Hence, the references fail to teach or suggest enabling connection of a plurality of *interchangeable* peripheral devices, as claimed in independent claims 1, 20, 24, and 25.

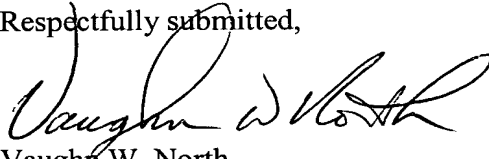
CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-31 are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant requests that the rejections and objections be reconsidered and withdrawn; and, that the claims be allowed and passed to issue.

Two independent claims were added. Additional excess claim fees are therefore due per 37 CFR 1.16 (b) and (c). The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee or to credit any overpayment in connection with this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

DATED this 2nd day of May, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vaughn W. North", written in a cursive style.

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